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(b) One case was filed and disposed of. A sum of Rs. 168 was awarded as compensation.

(c) Seven rupees.

Public Service.

Increments to acting clerks in continuous service.

*211 Q.—Khan Bahadur Haji Abdulla Haji Qasim Sahib: Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether acting (but passed) clerks without any substantive appointments with continuous acting service are allowed annual increments at the rate admissible on the scale on which they are borne;

(b) whether the Government will be pleased to state whether unpassed men do not come under the category of 'clerks'?

A.—(a) Yes, subject to the service being approved.

(b) The question is not understood. A certain number of clerks are unpassed men and subject to the rules relating to such.

Salt.

Saltpetre factories and refineries in the Presidency.

*212 Q.—Mr. T. Adinarayana Chettiyar: Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government have issued a G.O. No. 25, Finance (C.S.), dated 13th February 1925, upon the proceedings of the Collector of Salt Revenue, No. 4640 (Salt), dated 6th December 1924, ordering the closing of the saltpetre factories and refineries in the Madras Presidency with effect from 1st October 1925;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government did not give a chance either to those engaged in the manufacture of crude and refined saltpetre or to the public to state their views and objections with regard to closing the factories;

(c) whether Government are aware that a very large number of people, traders as well as coolies, are engaged in this industry many of whom will be ruined if this industry is thus suddenly put an end to;

(d) whether the Government are aware that the quantity and quality of the crude saltpetre produced in this province depend very much on the sufficiency of rainfall in the area in which the pans are situated;

(e) whether it is not a fact that the recent reduction in the production of saltpetre is due to the diminished rainfall in the recent years;

(f) whether Government are aware that dealers engaged in this industry have advanced large sums to the 'uppiliars' working for them and that they would find it difficult to realize these advances if this industry is thus suddenly sought to be put an end to;

(g) whether as regards the manufacture of common salt and also as regards fish-curing yards Government usually give adequate notice before calling upon them to close their factories;

(h) whether Government are aware that as regards the manufacture of crude saltpetre a bare six months' notice for closing long-established concerns has been given;

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(*i*) whether Government are considering the cancellation of this Order or the giving of adequate notice to those engaged in the manufacture of saltpetre so that they can wind up their concerns without serious loss ; and

(*j*) the number and the total pay of the staff of the Salt Department which Government expect to at once dispense with if this Government Order is to be given effect to on 1st October 1925 ?

A.—(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) *to* (*j*) The Government have the general question under consideration.

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" May I ask whether my hon. Friend is aware that there are about 300 saltpetre factories in this Presidency and that his G.O. No. 25, dated 13th February 1925, which has been so suddenly sprung upon them has badly affected all of them ? "

The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR :—" At the moment I cannot exactly recollect the number of factories in this Presidency. As the answer shows, the whole question is under consideration and I have been discussing it with the Collector of Salt. I do not think I can say anything more at present because no final conclusion has been arrived at."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" Since the Government say that they are examining the matter, and all the owners of these 300 factories are kept in a state of anxiety by this Government Order, will the Government be pleased to suspend the Order until they arrive at a final conclusion ? "

The hon. Mr. T. E. MOIR :—" The decision will be arrived at as soon as possible."

Local Boards and Municipal Councils.

Issue of surcharge certificates under the District Municipalities Act.

*213 *Q.*—Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR : Will the hon. the Member for Finance and the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state the cases in which the Examiner of Local Fund Accounts has issued surcharge certificates under the District Municipalities Act, 1920, and for what sums ?

A.—The attention of the hon. Member is invited to the answer to clause (*a*) of question No. 1521 printed in the Proceedings of the Council, dated 6th December 1924, which gives the information required up to 18th October 1924. The following are the cases in which surcharge certificates were issued subsequently :—

Name of municipality.		Amount for which surcharge certificates were issued. RS.	A.	P.
Bezwada		50	0	0
Villupuram	(i)	362	13	0
	(ii)	185	14	1
Tirupati	(i)	17	5	7
	(ii)	10	5	0
	(iii)	8	11	0
	(iv)	5	8	0
Saidapet		4,170	0	0